

Remarks

This is response to the Office Action mailed on June 18, 2003. Claims 1-9 remain pending in the application. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

In section 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Elkin et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,123,174, in view of Hyvönen at al., U.S. Patent No. 5,813,496, and Pollock, U.S. Patent No. 5,923,572. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 and 6 generally recite a system and device for manual lubrication of an apparatus having a plurality of lubrication points.

As noted in the Office Action, Elkin neither discloses nor suggests a system or device for manual lubrication of an apparatus having a plurality of lubrication points.

Hyvönen discloses an automated system for monitoring and controlling the circulation lubrication of the bearings of a paper machine. In Hyvönen, lubrication oil is automatically fed from an oil-lubrication center through a series of pipes to lubrication points, and is fed back to the center through a system of return pipes. Hyvönen, abstract.

The rejection states that it would have been obvious to combine the disclosure of Hyvönen with Elkin. This combination is respectfully traversed, for the reasons provided below.

First, there is no suggestion as to how the system for lubrication replacement disclosed by Elkin could be combined with the lubrication circulation system disclosed by Hyvönen. In Elkin, lubrication fluid in a crankcase of a vehicle engine is replaced (see, e.g., Elkin, abstract), while in Hyvönen lubrication is circulated through a series of pipes to a plurality of points of a machine. Therefore, because it is physically unclear as to how the lubrication replacement system of Elkin could be combined with the lubrication circulation system of Hyvönen, one skilled in the art would not be motivated to combine the systems since the systems are configured to perform different functions. See MPEP 2145(II).

Second, there is no motivation provided in either reference or the level of skill in the art to suggest the combination. See MPEP 2143.01. As noted previously, Elkin discloses replacement of fluid at a single point, while Hyvönen discloses a lubrication circulation system for a machine. Neither reference suggests it would be desirable to combine a fluid replacement system (Elkin) with a fluid circulation system (Hyvönen), and one skilled in the art would not

motivated to combine a system configured to replace fluid at single point with a system including a plurality of pipes to circulate fluid through the system.

Third, assuming for sake of argument only that the system of Elkin can be combined with the system of Hyvönen, neither reference discloses a system or device for manual lubrication of an apparatus having a plurality of lubrication points, as recited by claims 1 and 6. Elkin discloses only replacement of lubrication fluid at a single point. Hyvönen discloses a system for the automated circulation of fluid to a plurality of points of a machine. There is no suggestion in Hyvönen that it would be desirable to configure the system to allow manual lubrication of the machine, or even how such a modification of Hyvönen could be accomplished.


Pollock does not remedy the shortcomings of Elkin and Hyvönen noted above.

For at least these reasons, claims 1 and 6, as well as claims 2-5 and 7-9 that depend therefrom, should be allowable. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Favorable reconsideration in the form of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney with any questions regarding this application.

Respectfully submitted,
MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
(612) 332-5300

Date: September 17, 2003

By: 
Name: John J. Gresens
Reg. No.: 33,112
JJG/RAK

RECEIVED
CENTRAL FAX CENTER

SEP 22 2003

OFFICIAL